

JAN 25 1968

Texts of Purported Confession and Pentagon's Reply

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24—Following are the texts of a statement broadcast in English today by the official North Vietnamese press agency, which attributed it to Comdr. Lloyd M. Bucher of the United States Navy, and of the Defense Department's response:

Purported Confession

I am Comdr. Lloyd Mark Bucher, captain of the U.S.S. Pueblo, belonging to the Pacific Fleet, U.S. Navy, who was captured while carrying out espionage activities after intruding deep into the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

My serial number is 58215401. I was born in Pocatello, Idaho, U.S.A. I am 38 years old.

The crew of our U.S.S. Pueblo are 83 in all, including 5 officers besides me, 75 servicemen and 2 civilians.

My ship had been sent to Sasebo, Japan, to execute assignments given by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

On Dec. 2, last, we received assignments at the port of Sasebo from Rear Adm. Frank A. Johnson, U.S. Navy commander in Japan, to conduct military espionage activities on the far eastern region of the Soviet Union and then on the offshore areas and coastal areas of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

My ship had conducted espionage activities on a number of occasions for the purpose of detecting the territorial waters of the Socialist countries.

'A Lot of Dollars'

Through such espionage activities, my ship detected the military installations set up along the coasts of the Socialist countries and submitted the materials to the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Recently, we were given another important mission by the U. S. Central Intelligence

Agency—that is, to detect the areas along the far east of the Soviet Union and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The U. S. Central Intelligence Agency promised me that if this task would be done successfully, a lot of dollars would be offered to the whole crew members of my ship and particularly I myself would be honored.

Soon after that, I reinforced the arms and equipment of the ship and made detailed preparations for espionage activities.

Then we disguised my ship as one engaged in research on oceanic electronics and left the port of Sasebo, Japan, and conducted espionage acts along the coast of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea via the general area off the Soviet Maritime Province. We pretended ourselves to conduct the observation of oceanic conditions on the high seas, electronics, research on electric waves, magnetic conditions and exploitation of oceanic materials.

Mission Began Jan. 16

It was on Jan. 16, 1968, that we entered the coastal waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea via the Soviet Maritime Province.

In accordance with the instructions we had received, my ship was on the utmost alert and observed and ascertained the depth of water, current, water temperature, sea basin, salt density and water transparency of the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with radar and various kinds of observatory instruments in a clandestine manner at Chongjin, Wonsan and several other points, and detected the radar network, accommodation capacities of the ports, the number of the incoming and outgoing vessels and maneuverability of the naval vessels of the Korean People's Army.

Furthermore we spied on various military installations

and the distribution of industries and the deployment of armed forces along the east coast areas and sailed up to the point 7.6 miles off Nodo when the navy patrol crafts of the Korean People's Army appeared.

We were on the alert instantly and tried to escape, firing at the navy patrol crafts of the People's Army.

'We Had No Way Out'

But the situation became more dangerous for us, and thus one of my men was killed, another heavily wounded and two others lightly wounded.

We had no way out, and were captured by the navy patrol crafts of the People's Army.

Having been captured now, I say frankly that our act was a criminal act which flagrantly violated the armistice agreement, and it was a sheer act of aggression.

I have no excuse whatsoever for my criminal act as my ship intruded deep into the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and was captured by the naval patrol crafts of the Korean People's Army in their self-defense action while conducting the criminal espionage activities.

My crime committed by me and my men is entirely indelible.

I and my crew have perpetrated such a grave criminal act, but our parents and wives and children at home are anxiously waiting for us to return home in safety.

Therefore, we only hope, and it is the greatest desire of myself and all my crew, that we will be forgiven leniently by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Pentagon's Reply

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tributed to Comdr. Lloyd M. Bucher by North Korean Communist propagandists is a travesty on the facts. The style and wording of the document provide unmistakable evidence in themselves

that this was not written or prepared by any American.

The major point which this propaganda utterance attempts to make is that the Pueblo had violated North Korean territorial waters and was in fact violating those territorial waters when the North Korean patrol craft appeared. This is absolutely untrue.

The Pueblo reported her position at that time to be 39 degrees 25 minutes north and 127 degrees 55 minutes east. The Pueblo's position as determined by the radar track of the North Koreans themselves was 39 degrees 25 minutes north and 127 degrees 56 minutes east. These two reported positions are within a mile of one another, and both show conclusively that the Pueblo was in international water.

The Pueblo was under orders from the beginning of its mission to stay at least 13 miles from North Korean territory. There is no evidence to suggest that these is much evidence both from her own radio transmission and from the information broadcast from the North Koreans themselves in their own internal report that the orders were obeyed.

Typical of this propaganda sham is the suggestion that the Central Intelligence Agency had promised Commander Bucher and his crew "a lot of dollars" for their mission. Commander Bucher is a naval officer commanding a naval ship and performing a naval mission. He is not employed by the Central Intelligence Agency and has promised nothing by the Central Intelligence Agency. Nor were any members of his crew.

The entire world learned during the Korean war of the tactics and techniques of Communist propaganda and of North Korean exploitation of men it held captive. This fabrication is but another example. No credence should be given this contrived statement.